

## « MY DEAR UNCLE » — THREE LETTERS FROM FRANCIS MARION CRAWFORD TO SAMUEL WARD

edited by ROBERT L. GALE

Francis Marion Crawford was a popular American writer, who between 1882 and 1909 wrote more than forty melodramatic novels and in addition many works of history, biography, and travel, several short stories, and a couple of plays. He was born at Bagni di Lucca, Italy, in 1854, was educated in various countries, travelled widely, succeeded as a story-teller, and purchased a villa at Sant' Agnello di Sorrento, which was his main residence from 1885 until death there in 1909 ended his intensely active life<sup>1</sup>.

His father was Thomas Crawford, the distinguished American sculptor, whose studios at villa Negroni in Rome were frequented by patrons and visitors from many lands until — and indeed even after<sup>2</sup> — his tragic death of eye cancer in 1857 at the age of forty-four. F. Marion Crawford's mother was Louisa Ward Crawford (later Mrs. Luthe Terry), of the famous New York Wards. Her older sister was Julia Ward Howe, abolitionist, authoress of « The Battle Hymn of the Republic », suffragist, and finally grand old lady; her younger sister, Annie Ward, distinguished herself by marrying Adolphe Mailliard, natural son of Joseph Bonaparte, Napoleon's older brother; and her brother, Samuel Ward, was an utterly fantastic man — brilliant scientific mind, student in Europe, linguist, banker in his father's Wall Street firm, California gold-rusher, would-be philosopher and critic and poet, occultist, lobbyist, and uncle to a host of adoring nieces and nephews<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> For additional information about F. Marion Crawford, see F[red]. L[ewis]. P[ate]c. « Crawford, Francis Marion », *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. by ALLEN JOHNSON and DUMAS MALONE, 20 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), IV, 519-520; and ARTHUR HOBSON QUINN, *American Fiction: An Historical and Critical Survey* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company Incorporated, 1936), pp. 385-403. For bibliographical material on Crawford, see JACOB BLANCK, *Bibliography of American Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), II, 341-363. For biographical as well as bibliographical information on Crawford, I am indebted to JOHN PILKINGTON, JR., unpubl. diss. (Harvard, 1951), « The Life of Francis Marion Crawford ».

<sup>2</sup> For example, by Nathaniel Hawthorne; see his *Notes of Travel*, 4 vol., III, 272-275, in *The Complete Writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne: Graylock Edition*, 22 vols. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1900).

<sup>3</sup> The best general account of these four Wards is LOUISE HALL THARP, *Four Saints and a Sinner: Julia Ward Howe, Louisa, Annie and Sam Ward* (Boston and

Toward the end of his amazing life, Sam Ward (1814-1884) inestimably aided his beloved nephew F. Marion Crawford. The young man, having been educated in New Hampshire, Cambridge, Heidelberg, and Rome, and then having spent some time in India as a student of Sanskrit and as an editor, had finally gone to Boston and New York to continue his studies and to cast about for employment. First he considered teaching, then review-writing, politics, and even a commercial position, if his influential Uncle Sam would help him by pulling a few of his illimitable wires. Instead, one night early in 1882 Uncle Sam assisted him in an even better way: after hearing Crawford tell the thrilling story of a diamond merchant named Mr. Jacobs, whom he had met in Simla, India, Ward encouraged him to fictionalize it and evidently acted as a mentor during the swift writing of it<sup>4</sup>.

*Mr. Isaacs: A Tale of Modern India* (1882), as the resulting work was called, was an instantaneous success. It was a happy combination of exotic ingredients, with Isaacs, the pleasantly mysterious Persian jewel dealer, intriguing for the release of an abducted Indian revolutionary, playing flawless polo, shooting tigers, and falling in love with a charming British girl—all in faraway India in a crowded month of well-paced action.

*Doctor Claudius: A True Story* (1883) quickly followed, begun in fact before the first novel had been accepted for publication. Again, Uncle Sam was an advisor<sup>5</sup>; and, again, the work was a hit.

This second novel, however, is not so good as the first. True, as Crawford himself judged, *Doctor Claudius* is more finished in style, the conversation — especially in the first half of the book — more sparkling, and the plot somewhat more credible. The story tells how Claudius, Phil. D., a *privat-dozent* at Heidelberg, inherits a fortune awaiting him in America and falls in love with Margaret, the young widow of a Russian count. Once in New York after a charmingly described voyage with the slowly melting though thoroughly chaperoned Margaret, the hero promptly absents himself from the last quarter of his novel to recross the Atlantic ostensibly to foil the sudden villainy of a former friend but actually to unblock Margaret's seemingly lost

Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1956). For information on Samuel Ward alone, see also Mrs. WINTHROP CHANLER, *Roman Spring: Memoirs* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1934), pp. 100-102, 156-158; and FRANK MALOY ANDERSON, *The Mystery of «A Public Man»: A Historical Detective Story* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1948), pp. 146-170.

<sup>4</sup> MAUD HOWE ELLIOTT, *My Cousin F. Marion Crawford* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934), pp. 127-128; MAUD HOWE ELLIOTT, *Uncle Sam Ward and His Circle* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), pp. 601, 625, 643; and ANDERSON, *Mystery*, p. 155.

<sup>5</sup> ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, pp. 132, 137, 140, 142.

jointure. There is too much plot, especially when almost all of it comes in the second half of the book. In addition, the villain is the initially charming Silas Barker, who too suddenly turns into almost a caricature of evil. The novel wanders and lacks the timing of *Mr. Isaacs*. Nonetheless completely different in setting, spiced with some clever social satire, and brightened with one especially fine character, *Doctor Claudius* does perhaps after all, as its author stated, « come very well as a second to Isaacs ».

The noteworthy character for us in *Doctor Claudius* is Horace Bellingham. Short but powerful, bald but snowily bearded, adept in Latin and knowing in the ways of the world, this seventy-year-old *bon vivant* was modeled directly on Uncle Sam Ward<sup>6</sup>. In fact, when Bellingham is first mentioned, he is called « the uncle of the whole human race »<sup>7</sup>. He pops in and out of the story on an endless round of social engagements, appearing to think only of the good of others, not least when merely gracing their lives with his superb conversation. When Claudius at one point visits him in his rooms, an unusually detailed description of the place follows, a description which one may conjecture proceeded from Crawford's innumerable confabs with Uncle Sam at his home. While entertaining his visitor, « Uncle » Horace genially confesses that like most men he is a liar, adding, « ...there's a club of us, two Americans and one Englishman »<sup>8</sup>. It is known that Sam Ward, Lord Rosebery, and a New York editor named William Henry Hurlbert formed « The Mendacious Club » when the three were in New York<sup>9</sup>. Further, Bellingham confides to Claudius that some day he will write a book of reminiscences. Starting to reveal its title, he stops and changes the subject, and when the young teacher asks the names, the older man refuses to tell, adding, « ...you would go and write it yourself, and steal my thunder »<sup>10</sup>. This all sounds very much like a private joke between Crawford and Ward, because Claudius is not a writer, save of lectures.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 229; ELLIOTT, *Uncle Sam*, pp. 601-602; and ANDERSON, *Mystery*, p. 155.

<sup>7</sup> F. MARION CRAWFORD, *Doctor Claudius: A True Story*, p. 181, in *The Complete Works of F. Marion Crawford*, 32 vols. (authorized ed., New York: P. F. Collier & Son, n. d.).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>9</sup> ANDERSON, *Mystery*, p. 170. For information concerning Hurlbert, see ELLIOTT, *Uncle Sam*, pp. 560-561. Lord Rosebery was Archibald Philip Primrose, 5th Earl of Rosebery (1847-1929). He was foreign minister of England under Gladstone, 1886 and again 1892-1894, and was prime minister of England, 1894-1895. Rosebery was an intimate friend of Sam Ward for many years, visiting him in America and entertaining him at his estate, Dalmeny Park, Edinburgh, and elsewhere. It was in care of the Earl of Rosebery, Dalmeny Park, Edinburgh, that Crawford wrote his letter to Ward dated January 3, 1883.

<sup>10</sup> CRAWFORD, *Doctor Claudius*, p. 245.

Finally, Horace Bellingham is described as writing « endless letters, and his correspondence was typical of himself — the scholar, the wanderer, and the Priest of Buddha by turns, and sometimes all at once »<sup>11</sup>. This too is a picture of Sam Ward, whose prodigious correspondence can be sufficiently indicated, surely, by noting that 365 letters from him to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow have survived<sup>12</sup>.

And now back to Crawford. Early in 1883 he rapidly wrote his third novel, *A Roman Singer*, which was serialized in the *Atlantic Monthly* beginning in July. Crawford's opinion that this work would « hit the mark » was both correct and justified. Like *Mr. Isaacs*, it is skillfully put together. Unlike *Doctor Claudius*, it has characters which are consistently drawn and parts which are effectively balanced. *A Roman Singer* has for its hero Nino Cardegna, who rises from humble beginnings to become a supremely thrilling opera tenor; but love is more important than art in this story, as Nino pursues the object of his affection from Rome to the wilds of Abruzzi — virgin territory for any British or American novelist to explore and exploit, exactly as was the India Crawford had used for the locale of *Mr. Isaacs*.

It was not until 1884 that *A Roman Singer* appeared in book form. By that time its author had tried a short story and an anti-British article<sup>13</sup>, had suddenly (in May of 1883) proceeded to London — seeing Uncle Sam at 36 Piccadilly<sup>14</sup> — and thence to Rome to join his mother and his half-sister Margaret Terry<sup>15</sup>, and had written his fourth novel, *To Leeward*, published in 1883. Late that year Uncle Sam, who had left America the previous November to avoid the legal consequences of some financial chicanery on the part of his business partners<sup>16</sup> and had been residing in various parts of England, joined the family group at Sorrento, moving to Rome when it did. In the words of Julia Ward Howe's daughter Maud,

At this time Uncle Sam seems to have vibrated between  
his sister's home, the Altamps in Rome, and Mentmore,

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246.

<sup>12</sup> ANDERSON, *Mystery*, p. 187. See also ELLIOTT, *Uncle Sam*, *passim*, for innumerable Ward letters.

<sup>13</sup> See footnotes 35 and 37 below, which explain Crawford's references in his letter to these short works.

<sup>14</sup> ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, p. 156. When Ward left America on November 20, 1882, « to avoid servance of proces » in connection with the disloyalty of two business associates, he went to England, giving his sister Julia as his address — « which keep private » — care of Charles Ellis, 36 Piccadilly, London; ELLIOTT, *Uncle Sam*, pp. 636-638. Crawford's letter of April 16, 1883, is so addressed to his uncle.

<sup>15</sup> For details of Crawford's trip, see ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, pp. 155-159.

<sup>16</sup> See footnote 14 above.

the Roseberys' country seat in England. The old man is still obsessed by his interest in Marion, alternately blaming him for neglect and praising him for industry<sup>17</sup>.

Fancying that his intensely busy nephew often failed to write him enough letters when they were apart, he still praised the young man's next novel, *An American Politician* (not published until 1885), as its composition progressed<sup>18</sup>.

In February of 1884 Crawford went to Constantinople determined to woo and win the hand of Elizabeth Berdan, daughter of General Hiram Berdan — the two were married in October of the same year — but the courtship was interrupted by virtually the only eventuality which Crawford would have allowed to interfere, the mortal sickness of a member of the family. Uncle Sam was dying, and the devoted nephew returned to Rome on March 25 to help care for him. Perhaps they talked about *Zoroaster*, Crawford's next novel, which his uncle did not live to see in print — it came out in 1885 — but which Crawford had long considered writing and may have finished during the winter of 1883-1884. Uncle Sam died on May 19, 1884, at Pegli, and his nephew was with him until the last<sup>19</sup>.

So ends the story of a celebrated uncle and a famous nephew. The three letters which follow demonstrate the relationship, and the love, between them. The letters were discovered only last year in Sorrento. Why they failed to remain with the bulk of Samuel Ward's papers, which ultimately were deposited in the Library of Congress and in the Howe and Chanler collections at Harvard University, will probably never be known. Perhaps they were near Sam Ward's bed in Rome and Crawford kept them for mementos after his uncle's death, knowing that the old man had loved them<sup>20</sup>. At any rate, the three letters, now published for the first time, escaped « the iniquity of oblivion » and are here printed by permission of the owner.

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<sup>17</sup> ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, p. 174. Crawford addressed his letter of March 14, 1884, to his uncle at Palazzo Altamps in Rome.

<sup>18</sup> ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, p. 174.

<sup>19</sup> CHANLER, *Roman Spring*, p. 158; ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, p. 179; and ELLIOTT, *Uncle Sam*, pp. 682, 683 and 686.

<sup>20</sup> It is known that Uncle Sam cherished Crawford's letters, for he wrote to his sister Julia Ward Howe on February 15, 1883, « I have written your Maud [Howe Elliott] lately and have sent your letters to Rome, saving two of Marion's which I keep as precious treasures of grateful affection... »; ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, p. 152. Crawford's letter of January 3, 1883, may have been one of the two so saved.

241 Beacon St  
 Boston Mass<sup>21</sup>  
 Jan 3<sup>d</sup> 1883

My dear Uncle

Many thanks for two letters, and for the notices from the Pall Mall and Athanaeum<sup>22</sup>. The one in the Pall Ml. though less laudatory is by far the most intellect criticism I have had, and if you know the writer, I would be glad if you would convey to him my sincere thanks.

The extraordinary reception which Isaacs has had, has resulted in many advantages. Mr Aldrich of the *Atlantic Monthly*<sup>23</sup> has contracted to pay me 1200 dollars for the privilege of printing a story not yet written, all rights remaining mine for further publication. Messrs Houghton Mifflin & Co<sup>24</sup> are making me advantageous offers for Dr Claudius, but I have not concluded anything as I shall ask Macmillan<sup>25</sup> what he will give me for the copyright all in a lump. I am advised by competent persons here, *not* to sell the rights to Isaacs and Claudius for *less* than 8000 dollars, which seems to me too much. At all events the sale has been phenomenal. In less than three weeks that copies have been available here, I have heard of the book from all parts of America, and from the most unexpected sources. I think that Claudius, which is much more

<sup>21</sup> This was the address of the home of Crawford's aunt Julia Ward Howe, where Crawford was staying at the time. See LAURA H. RICHARDS and MAUD HOWE ELLIOTT, *Julia Ward Howe: 1819-1910*, 2 vols, (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916), II, 71.

<sup>22</sup> These were British periodicals: the *Pall Mall Budget*, a London weekly, was issued from 1868 through 1920; the *Athanaeum*, a London literary weekly, was founded in 1828 and ran until 1921.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Bailey Aldrich (1836-1907) was an American author and editor. Though he also wrote poetry and travel sketches, he is now best known for a few surprise ending short stories and his fine autobiographical novel of childhood, *The Story of a Bad Boy*, 1870. Aldrich was editor from 1881 to 1890 of the *Atlantic Monthly*, the distinguished American magazine founded in Boston in 1857.

<sup>24</sup> The fine American publishing house.

<sup>25</sup> Alexander Macmillan (1818-1896) was head of the British publishing firm and a director of the commercially separate American company of the same name. Macmillan and Company, London and New York, brought out most of Crawford's books.

highly finished, will come very well as a second to Isaacs. I will not risk sending the MS of Claudius to Macmillan, nor will I accept 10 per cent as the condition of publishing, seeing what offers are made here. I owe to them the first offer, but I do not feel obliged to take from them less than others are ready to give. It would be very important to me to know the *number of copies printed by Macmillan in the first edition of Isaacs*, if convenient, by cable — the mere number is sufficient. My arrangement with Aldrich is now a contract, the money to be paid on delivery of the full manuscript. I will let you know about the plan of the story, which is laid in Rome and the Abruzzi<sup>26</sup>.

In regard to your instructions for obtaining information about elections &c, I must know a little more about what you require. The proceedings of the two parties are known to be very different. Will there be time if I give you all you require by the 15th March? If sooner, please cable, as my work is pressing and I must make arrangements. The first number of the Atlantic story will appear on April 15th<sup>27</sup> and they must have three numbers to start with; besides this, I have yet the second article for the Century<sup>28</sup> to write. You see I am hard driven, and must plan my time.

To return to Claudius — it is a better book than Isaacs, but will never have the same success. Perhaps some passages may call out the admiration of English Critics, like my scene in the Himalayas — I mean, for instance, the night at sea in the yacht<sup>29</sup>. But they will have to allow that the style is more finished, the conversations more brilliant, and the story less improbable.

<sup>26</sup> This story, not yet referred to by title, was *A Roman Singer*, first published in book form in 1884. The Abruzzi scenes are excellently done.

<sup>27</sup> The first installment actually appeared in July; see *Atlantic Monthly*, LII (July, 1893), 1-12. The entire novel appeared in twelve consecutive monthly issues, two chapters per month, ending June, 1884.

<sup>28</sup> The *Century Magazine* was a popular New York quarterly (1870-1930), to which Crawford frequently contributed; however, no item in it by Crawford has been identified earlier than 1893.

<sup>29</sup> Crawford is referring here to a very dramatic scene in each of his first two novels; Chapter XII of *Mr. Isaacs* tells of the exciting rescue, against a backdrop of the awesome Himalayas, of the Indian revolutionary; in Chapter VII of *Doctor Claudius*, the hero tells Margaret that he loves her, under a warm, starry sky in the mid-Atlantic.

As for the Italian Story, I have hopes that I may succeed better with it than I have hitherto done in my own eyes. You know that I was never sanguine about my first, and hardly expected to attract any notice. I am not sanguine now, though the flattering offers I receive give me a good, sound sense of freedom for the future. But my inmost wish is to please myself, a thing I have not hitherto done.

Boocock has not yet sent for the 50 dollars<sup>30</sup>, for which however, you have my sincerest thanks. Do not send me any more, unless it be for work to be done like that you propose. You have done much for me, but the most successful of your doings was making me a novelist.

Very respectfully your affectionate

Marion

Samuel Ward Esq.

Ap. 16. 1883.  
241 Beacon St.  
Boston Mass.

My dear Uncle,

The series of very interesting and remarkable letters with which you have blessed me demand an immediate answer. First of all, let me tell you that I have delayed my departure until some time in May. The Gardners will go to Japan<sup>31</sup>, and I to Rome. The resolve

<sup>30</sup> Boocock is Samuel Ward Boocock, who was the son of Julia Ward Howe's favorite music teacher and who was named not for Uncle Sam Ward but for his and Julia's father Colonel Samuel Ward (1786-1839). Boocock «was a loyal friend to [Uncle] Sam, who loved him like a son», says Elliott in *Uncle Sam*, p. 621. Occasionally, he helped to straighten out Uncle Sam's often tangled finances. The mention of the fifty dollars probably has to do with a gift which Ward sent Julia on November 19, 1882 (on the eve of his sudden departure for England), «to pay Marion's expenses to Canada [to secure copyright] when his book [*Mr. Isaacs*] appears»; ELLIOTT, *Uncle Sam*, p. 638. For a slightly different version of the same letter from Sam Ward, just quoted, see ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, p. 147. *Mr. Isaacs* was published on December 5, 1882; see BLANCK, *Bibliography of American Literature*, II, 341.

<sup>31</sup> Mrs. John L. Gardner and her wealthy husband, of 152 Beacon Street, Boston, lived near Julia Ward Howe. «Mrs. Jack», as the attractive, witty woman, fourteen years Crawford's senior, was called, encouraged the budding novelist during the beginning of his literary career. It should perhaps be added that Crawford's family,



was made hastily, and the sudden execution of it turned out impossible, but it is now all quite settled and I have written home to prepare them all for my coming. As for your kind and tempting offer to come to you in London, I can and will come after the summer is over<sup>32</sup>. As I said before, I want to see you, but certainly not the whole Almanach de Gotha in battle array. I cannot by letter enter into details, but I will ask you not to mention to [*sic*] my plans to madame, if you write to her, as you sometimes do write. There is a time in a man's life when certain things must stop, and I think the time is come. Help me, dear uncle and father, and keep my counsel<sup>33</sup>.

First I will tell you of my doings. The article on the Mohamadans [*sic*] in India, of which I lately spoke elicited a cheque of \$150 from Harper's Monthly<sup>34</sup>. I have also written a short story, very sad, I fear, which will probably appear in Harper's Weekly<sup>35</sup>. The «Roman Singer» begins to come out in the *July* number of the Atlantic, to begin the [*sic*] volume<sup>36</sup>. I have written another letter to the *Tribune*<sup>37</sup>, which appeared yesterday, in a more serious

worried by the report that Crawford was considering a trip to Japan with the Gardners, was rather relieved when arrangements were changed—Crawford decamped for England and then Rome, while the Gardners sailed for the Orient without him. See ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, p. 122; CHANLER, *Roman Spring*, pp. 118-119; and THARP, *Three Saints and a Sinner*, pp. 350-351. For a reproduction of the Sargent portrait of Mrs. Gardner, see MAUD HOWE ELLIOTT, *Three Generations* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1923), opposite p. 378.

<sup>32</sup> However, Crawford changed his plans and went from Boston to Rome via London, after all, arriving there on May 16, 1883; ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, pp. 155-156.

<sup>33</sup> This section is interesting for three reasons: (1) though always a devoted son, Crawford here refers to his mother as «madame» in what may be a slightly satirical way (note further that in the letter of March 14, 1884, to his uncle, Crawford seems sorry that society in Constantinople will not permit his half-sister Margaret [see footnote 45 below] to visit there unless chaperoned by «the mother»); (2) Crawford at the age of twenty-eight is just beginning to find his vocation and hence to express his independence; and yet (3) Crawford, whose father had died when the future novelist was only three years of age, looks to his «dear uncle» for paternal comfort.

<sup>34</sup> F. MARION CRAWFORD, «The Mohammadans [*sic*] in India», *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, LXXI (July, 1885), 165-180.

<sup>35</sup> F. MARION CRAWFORD, «A Recognition», *Harper's Weekly*, XXVII (June 2, 1883), 346-347.

<sup>36</sup> See footnote 27 above.

<sup>37</sup> F. MARION CRAWFORD, «British Rule in India», *New York Daily Tribune*, April 15, 1883, p. 3, cols. 4-5. Crawford's early works are curiously filled with

strain, telling certain stories of my own knowledge. I know well the opposition that such writings must elicit, and the kind of sneering, go-to-the-devil, tone that will at first be taken against me. But I think such work will not affect the sale of my books in one way or another. However that may be, I am sure that I am right, and I mean to see whether it is not possible to raise some discussion before the world. The height of my ambition at present is to get an article on the subject printed in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*<sup>38</sup>. No half-expressed opinions will do at the beginning of such a question.

I am sorry to learn that Macmillan will not put *Claudius* through the magazine — but I think he is right. There are no *points* for a serial in that odd book, and the plot does not amount to a row of pins, as Aunt Julia would say. Macmillan has been misinformed about the supplies of Isaacs. The whole American edition was sold in three weeks, and, for nearly *two months*, not a copy could be bought in the country — anywhere. There is now a plentiful supply. *Claudius* will perhaps sell well — but not at first on its own merits. The *Roman Singer* will hit the mark. *Zoroaster*<sup>39</sup> still absorbs my thoughts and will make a massive center piece for a romance. Best thanks for the *Firdusi*<sup>40</sup>, not yet arrived. I received Lord Lawrence's life in the *Critic*<sup>41</sup> the other day and was delighted with it. It is the fairest account of one of the best men who ever served a despotic government.

My health is better than it has been since I went to India. I abstain wholly from all stimulants, including tea and coffee, and I smoke light cigarettes, which seem to agree with me. I am surprised

anti-British pronouncements. Evidently it was one of his ambitions in 1883 «to raise some discussion before the world» about British colonialism. Note the anti-British comments in the letter of March 14, 1884, from Constantinople.

<sup>38</sup> *The Revue des Deux Mondes* is the famous cultural semi-monthly founded in Paris in 1831.

<sup>39</sup> The composition of *Zoroaster* was delayed but may have been accomplished during the winter of 1883-1884; see the letter of March 14, 1884. The novel was published in 1885.

<sup>40</sup> As an amateur student of several Eastern languages, Crawford would naturally be interested in the *Shāhnāma* of the Persian poet *Firdousi*.

<sup>41</sup> The *Critic* was a New York fortnightly review of literature, running from 1881 to 1906. John Laird Mair, Lord Lawrence (1811-1879), was governor-general of India 1863-1869; his moderate policy of non-intrigue Crawford admired.

at finding myself so much better after a winter of such hard work, and I am game for another book.

As you expected, I laughed very much over Jacobs'<sup>42</sup> letter, and Ellis'<sup>43</sup> remarks. No Oriental in India would relish being shown shown in the connexion in which I put Isaacs, and no Englishman could see the beauty of the man's face and eccentric character. He is not Armenian, but Persian, and in spite of his protest, he was a devout Mohammadan [*sic*] when I knew him, reading the Korán and fasting, and all the rest of it.

I am reading the numerous speeches you have sent me, with great interest. So far, L<sup>d</sup> R's<sup>44</sup> is by far the best. L<sup>d</sup> Salisbury<sup>45</sup> is an old woman. I will write more when I have read them all.

One word I must add about Margaret's change of faith. I need not tell you that she has my fullest sympathy in her step. It is remarkable that not a word has been said of her father in all the correspondence I have received directly, any more than in what you send me. How will he take it?<sup>46</sup>

Believing, as I do, that Western Scientists are making much cry over very little wool, I rejoice to see her safely rescued from the ideas of Spencer and Huxley<sup>47</sup>. Truly, she knew how to find in

<sup>42</sup> Jacobs was a Persian diamond merchant whom Crawford had met in Simla, India, in 1879; he was the model for the titular hero of *Mr. Isaacs*. See ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, pp. 67-70.

<sup>43</sup> Presumably Charles Ellis, of 36 Piccadilly, London; see footnote 14 above.

<sup>44</sup> Undoubtedly Lord Rosebery; see footnote 9 above.

<sup>45</sup> Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil, 3rd Marquis of Salisbury (1830-1903), British statesman whose arguments at the Constantinople Conference of December 1876-January 1877 and whose conservative policy as secretary for India, 1874-1878, Crawford evidently disapproved. *Speeches of the Marquis of Salisbury* were edited with a short biography in 1885 by H. W. Lucy, a close friend of F. Marion Crawford.

<sup>46</sup> Margaret is Louisa Margaret (« Daisy ») Terry, later Mrs. Winthrop Chanler (1862-1952), Crawford's half-sister, the daughter of his mother Louisa Ward Crawford and her second husband, Luther Terry, an American painter in Italy. Terry was a Protestant, and two of his brothers were Presbyterian ministers. See CHANLER, *Roman Spring*, p. 3. For information concerning Margaret's conversion to Catholicism, see her own account, together with letters to and from Crawford written late in 1882, in CHANLER, *Roman Spring*, pp. 125-149. Crawford himself had become a Catholic only a few years earlier. Margaret became a Catholic on March 19, 1883, at San Luigi dei Francesi in Rome: both of her parents, especially her father, were disappointed, but she wrote more than fifty years later that she « never for a moment had reason to regret it »; CHANLER, *Roman Spring*, p. 148.

<sup>47</sup> CRAWFORD here refers to Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) and Thomas Henry

their dry thoughts, interpretations of noble beauty — but the beauty was her own, and she put it to them. But she soon found them unsatisfactory, and it was a case of Catholic or atheist with her. Happily she chose the right — and not the least satisfaction to me is that you are yourself glad.

And so I close this letter of odds and ends, with many, many thanks for your written sayings, while I hope that before long there need be no writing between us.

Very respectfully your affectionate

*Marion*

S. Ward Esq.

P. S. - I forgot to tell you — and it may please you — that the other night I was the honoured guest of the *Papyrus Club* (a literary fraternity in much esteem here) and the entire banquet of about a hundred gentlemen drank my health standing, after listening to a long eulogy of me by the president.

Club de Constantinople, Pera<sup>48</sup>.

March 14, 1884.

My dear Uncle

The weather is worse and worse. It is snowing here, and I am glad you are among the sunbeams in Rome, instead of kneedeep in the slush of Péra. I saw Lady Dufferin and Lady Helen Blackwood this afternoon and they send you affectionate messages to the effect that they are disappointed that you have not come. Lord D.<sup>49</sup> I have not seen for some days.

Huxley (1825-1895), powerful late 19th-century British advocates of Darwinianism, which they applied with certain reservations to ethical and sociological considerations. Crawford's *Doctor Claudius* mentions Spencer repeatedly, though not in a derogatory way; see *Doctor Claudius*, pp. 82, 105, 245, and 305.

<sup>48</sup> The European section of Constantinople.

<sup>49</sup> Lord Dufferin was Frederick Temple Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 1st Marquess of Dufferin and Ava (born 1826 in Florence, Italy; died 1902). Dufferin was a highly competent diplomat and administrator, serving England well in the Levant, India, Canada, and Russia before 1881, at which time he was transferred to Con-

I had a letter from the Duchess of S.<sup>50</sup> last Monday, saying that the Duke was coming here. I had already heard that he was in Asia Minor performing juggling tricks with the geography of that region, and supporting a scheme to convert the Dead Sea into a soda water fountain. A Mrs Blair is said to be with his party — I am told she is the wife of a man whom the Duke accidentally killed some time ago. Is this true? Is she not one of the Hope Lodge symposium?

Garmoyie is here in the glory of his masher collar and his breach of promise. He excites no notice.

I spent yesterday afternoon on horseback with General and Miss Berdan<sup>51</sup> scouring the downs and riding up perpendicular precipices. Everyone rides here, and they ride up and down places that make one's hair stand on end, until one is used to it.

Fasting began on Ash Wednesday with its usual severity. I attended the sixth heavy dinner last night since that date. Lenten dinners consist of fourteen courses with punch before the game. This is mortification of the stomach — and if any ordinarily sensitive stomach is not mortified to the verge of decay by the treatment, it is that the austerities are not undergone in the proper spirit. The proper spirit is two helpings of foie gras and one of each of the other punishments, to be followed by two hours conversation before a raging coal fire. You will then feel like a Strasburg goose on the eve of execution.

I am pottering over a stew of ideas, and I mean to potter for some time in a complete abstraction from any sense of duty in the matter of writing books. An occasional idea takes shape, but the ideas are scarce and the shape shadowy. I do not allow anything to

stantinople to negotiate in connection with a political disturbance involving Turkey, Egypt, and Arabia. In 1884 he was appointed viceroy to India. He and Lady Dufferin were lifelong friends of F. Marion Crawford and his wife, both of whom were gladdened when in 1888 Dufferin was made ambassador at Rome.

<sup>50</sup> Possibly another reference to Salisbury; see footnote 45 above.

<sup>51</sup> The reference is to General Hiram Berdan, inventor of the famous Berdan rifle used during the American Civil War, and to his daughter, Elizabeth Christopher (« Bessie ») Berdan, whom Crawford married in October, 1884, in Constantinople; see ELLIOTT, *My Cousin*, pp. 184 and 190.

disturb the peaceful visions of nothingness that float like cool air through my brain. Escott must wait — everybody must wait, until I am ready to set to again. I have been overdriven and must get my wind before I do anything more. I ought to have read a dozen novels instead of writing one<sup>52</sup> this winter. I do not think I will publish that one.

By this mail I write to the mother, proposing that she and Margaret should come here for a month, or as long as they please, in the late spring. Unfortunately society here will not accept the idea of Margaret<sup>53</sup> travelling alone with me, especially with different names. Such is the ridiculous prejudice of this age! And may the foul fiend take it!

This is only a scrawl, but it bears a loving greeting, dear Uncle and you must even take the will for the deed of the eloquence it has not brought forth. Love to all.

Very respectfully, Your affectionate

*Marion*

S. Ward *Esq.*

<sup>52</sup> Probably *Zoroaster*, published 1885. Crawford's increasing self-assurance and independence are notable here, and indeed throughout the letter of March 13, 1884.

<sup>53</sup> Margaret is Crawford's beloved half-sister; see footnote 46 above (see also footnote 33 above).